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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 28, 1961

New Presidential Adviser

The appointment of General Maxwell Taylor as "military representative of the President" provides President Kennedy with a war-seasoned, highly competent defense adviser at a time of mounting international tensions. Mr. Kennedy undoubtedly has felt the need for such a close consultant on military and intelligence matters ever since the Cuban fiasco. With the Government facing a new crisis in Berlin and continuing problems in Asia and elsewhere, the counsel of such authority on big and "brushfire" wars as General Taylor should be of great value at the White House.

Although the controversial general will not have the title or the authority exercised during World War II by Admiral Leahy, who was "chief of staff" to Presidents Roosevelt and Truman, it is clear that he will wield considerable power in military circles. Involving no command powers and not being interposed between the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the President, the office in no sense meets General Taylor's past proposals for a super-chief of staff over all the military branches. It appears, however, to be a compromise between the super-

chief plan and the present Joint Chiefs setup, which has been criticized by General Taylor and others as tending to promote vacillation and delay in defense decisions.

Thus, the return to active duty in a new top-level post of General Taylor presages the revision of certain defense policies followed under the Eisenhower administration, particularly the tendency to rely more on massive retaliation by nuclear weapons than on conventional arms and armies. President Kennedy already has indicated his feeling that conventional arms should not be neglected, lest we be caught unprepared to meet the threat of small wars in scattered parts of the globe. General Taylor warned of these threats and of the necessity for preparing to counter them in his book, "The Uncertain Trumpet," published after his retirement as Army Chief of Staff. He advocated other military reforms, organizational and tactical, in the much-debated book.

General Taylor's appointment amounts to an extension of his assignment by the President to study and report on military planning and intelligence in connection with the ill-fated invasion of Cuba. The White House made it plain that he will continue to advise on intelligence as well as defense problems. If this duty will bring about better liaison between the Defense Department and the Central Intelligence Agency, so much the better. Certainly the President will have at his side during the critical times ahead a military expert of unquestioned ability, experience and perception.